



STATE OF INDIANA
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Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

News Release
For immediate release

Employers joining INShape Indiana efforts

INDIANAPOLIS (January 4, 2008) – Hoosier health and fitness is getting another boost to start the new year. Governor Mitch Daniels said today that more than a dozen companies, led by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana, have agreed to participate in company wellness programs that incorporate INShape Indiana, his program to promote healthy lifestyles. And INShape will launch its second *10 in 10 Challenge* starting next week.

“Now, we’re going wholesale, and it will really make a difference in the number of Hoosiers working on a more active and healthy lifestyle by having so many large organizations involved,” said Daniels.

INShape-Anthem partnership

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana is leading a group of organizations, including Kroger Company, that are incorporating INShape into the wellness programs they provide to employees. The participating employers represent more than 120,000 employees statewide. This effort will reach more than double the number of individuals, 57,000, who have signed up to participate in INShape in its first two years.

Each employer has agreed to appoint a wellness leader to promote INShape involvement among employees and to share their expertise quarterly. The companies also will reach out to other employers to get on board in the coming weeks.

Anthem will share its successful health initiatives, such as providing healthy eating options in the employee cafeteria, with other employers.

“We are pleased to be a part of this important health initiative,” said Robert W. Hillman, president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana. “By 2010, it’s estimated that half the U.S. population will suffer from a chronic disease. If we don’t work together to improve the health of our fellow Hoosiers, chronic diseases related to smoking, obesity and lack of physical activity will put further pressure on the cost of health care and have negative consequences for Indiana families and for the state’s business climate.”

Among other initiatives, Kroger plans to put fitness kiosks that include health, nutrition and safety information provided by Kroger, INShape and the American Cancer Society, in its various stores throughout Indiana.

“This is an exceptional opportunity for our associates and our customers. We are very pleased to make this investment in their health. As a company, Kroger has been very active in supporting health and fitness in the communities we serve,” said Bob Moeder, president of Kroger’s Central Division, which will offer programming to more than 15,000 employees across the state.

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INShape Indiana

Other employers who have signed up so far to participate in the wellness effort are Ball State University, Cummins, Dow Agra Services, GM Chrysler, Indiana University, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Marsh, Mays Chemical Company, Monarch Beverage, Purdue University, Red Gold, State of Indiana, University of Southern Indiana and Zimmer.

10-in-10 Challenge

The successful INShape program that encourages Hoosiers to lose 10 pounds in 10 weeks will begin its second run on Monday. The program encourages participants to lose one pound a week over 10 weeks by improving their nutrition and increasing physical activity. Each week, participants receive an e-mail tip about how to reduce their daily intake by 250 calories and increase activity by 250 calories.

Last year, 40,000 people joined 10 in 10; the average weight loss reported was 7 ¼ pounds. Of participants, 32 percent of those reporting lost 10 pounds or more.

This year's program will incorporate a workplace wellness focus and a smoking cessation component for those trying to quit. Ten percent of 10 in 10 participants last year said they were smokers.

Sign up for the 10 in 10 Challenge is available at this link: <http://www.in.gov/inshape/>

Small employer wellness tax credit

The Healthy Indiana Plan, which provides health care coverage for uninsured low-income Hoosiers, approved by the General Assembly in 2007, also included a employer wellness tax credit (50 percent of qualified expenses) for employers who offer a qualified wellness program to employees.

The tax credit is available to employers with 2 to 100 employees that have received certification from the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) for a "Qualified Wellness Program." Such a program must have incentives for weight loss, smoking cessation and preventive screenings. ISDH put an emergency rule in place to implement the tax credit, and since then, programs for 51 small employers with 2,500 employees, have been certified. The wellness tax credit is retroactive to January 1, 2007.

According to the state Department of Workforce Development, companies with 99 employees or under represent nearly 41 percent of all private sector employment, or more than 1 million employees.

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More information about INShape Indiana is available here:

http://www.in.gov/gov/files/Press/INShape_fact_sheet.pdf

Audio from the governor's announcement is available here:

http://www.in.gov/gov/files/Audio/010408_Media_availability.MP3

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